



## **Pilot Program Evaluation Summary**

**July 2008**

### **Executive Summary**

An overwhelming number of participants of the National Training for Counselors and Mentors (NT4CM) pilot program were extremely pleased with the training sessions. The feedback presented in this summary confirms that 1) there is a need for NT4CM, 2) the pilot program content was useful, and 3) participants want the program to continue in future years.

### **Overall Pilot Program Statistics**

Seventeen states and Puerto Rico participated in the pilot program. Six states and Puerto Rico opted for "full" participation (implemented the entire training) and ten states chose to be "curriculum" participants (incorporated parts of the NT4CM curriculum into existing training sessions—e.g. FAFSA4caster, ACG).

Six states and Puerto Rico provided final statistics on the training sessions conducted that included at least part of the NT4CM curriculum. In total, these states trained 1,149 participants in 17 training sessions. The remaining 11 states anticipated conducting a combined 170 training sessions with a projected attendance of 6,710 participants.

A total of 3,299 participant guides and 144 instructor manuals were distributed to all 17 states and Puerto Rico. Both the training sessions and materials for Puerto Rico were in Spanish.

### **Training Satisfaction Survey Data Summary**

#### **Participants**

Two "full" states (Florida and Georgia) and Puerto Rico (also "full") returned completed Training Satisfaction Surveys. Eighty three percent of the total 461 respondents participated in the Florida training sessions. The percentages referenced below were calculated from the total 461 respondent base unless otherwise specified.

High school counselors (62%) were over half the participants. Of the remaining participants, 25% were from non-profit organizations and community-based groups, 10% were TRIO, 3% were junior high school counselors, and 1% was college-affiliated.

Most of the participants were relatively inexperienced in providing assistance to students to pursue education beyond high school, with 1-5 years experience (40%). Of the remaining participants, 21% had 6-10 years, 15% had less than one year, 10% had 11-15 years, 9% had 21+ years, and 5% had 16-20 years of experience.

#### **Curriculum**

Participants evaluated the program using the following scale:

- 1 Unacceptable
- 2 Poor/Less than acceptable
- 3 Moderate/Acceptable
- 4 Good/More than acceptable
- 5 Outstanding/Much more than acceptable

The curriculum received consistently high marks from respondents. Over half of the participants responded "outstanding" when asked if the training met their needs for assisting students to prepare financially for college (62%).

When asked how well the training met the overall objectives stated at the beginning of the workshop, 70% responded “outstanding.”

An overwhelming 78% responded “outstanding” when asked to rate the NT4CM materials. When asked to evaluate the case studies, charts, and other graphic illustrations, 61% responded “outstanding.” 73% of participants also rated the presentation’s clarity and accuracy “outstanding.” Overall, an average rating of 4.7 was given for each question.

Twenty five percent responded to the five questions stated above as “good” and only 0.2% responded “unacceptable.”

The Training Satisfaction Survey also provided participants with the opportunity to comment on the trainers and the facilities. Since NT4CM did not secure the trainers or the facilities this data was assessed at the state level.

### **Outreach and Publicity**

Most of the participants learned about the training through e-mail (60%). 24% learned of it from a colleague, 10% from other sources (letter, flyer, mailing, [fsa4counselors.ed.gov](http://fsa4counselors.ed.gov), NACAC, school services), 4% from a postcard, and 2% from a Web site (unspecified).

### **Additional Comments and Suggestions**

As can be surmised based on earlier comments, most who received the training found it met their needs and that there was no need for further training (71%). The other 29% responded yes with the following suggestions:

- More in-depth FAFSA training (13%)
- Training on loans/grants/scholarships (12%)
- Information for a parents/students “Financial Aid Night” (8%)
- Annual updates (7%)
- Personal trainings at schools/campuses (4%)

Most participants did not think the training needed to be offered in other formats or mediums (61%). The remaining respondents suggested other options such as:

- Webinar (14%)
- Online training (9%)
- Training on CD/DVD/Video (3%)

### **Quotes from Participants**

“Great workshop for someone wanting the basics of financial aid!”

“Very helpful, I learned a lot about new programs. Thank you. I'd like to do this yearly to stay knowledgeable about updates.”

“Excellent, wonderful opportunity to learn about financial aid. I would love it if parents and students would receive this training so they can learn how to fill out the FAFSA.”

“We need more people to come to receive this training.”

“Resources are excellent!”

“Good job! Where were you guys all these years?”

### **Participating States (\*Full Participant)**

- |               |            |                 |                  |             |
|---------------|------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------|
| - Alaska*     | - Florida* | - Kentucky      | - New York       | -Tennessee* |
| - Arkansas*   | - Georgia* | - Maine         | - North Carolina | - Utah*     |
| - California  | - Illinois | - Mississippi   | - Ohio           |             |
| - Connecticut | - Iowa     | - New Hampshire | - Puerto Rico*   |             |